

TRINITY CHARGE--THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ralph C. Link, Pastor
Christ Church, Duncannon 9:00 A.M.
Trinity Church, New Bloomfield 10:30 A.M.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP April 29, 1973

The Organ Prelude
*The Hymn of Praise 177
*The Call to Worship
*The Prayer of Confession (Unison)
Gracious Father, whose mercy is higher
than the heavens, wider than our wanderings,
and deeper than all sin; receive back unto
yourself your bewildered and broken children.
Forgive our folly and excess, our coldness
to human sorrows, our envy of those who
prosper and are at ease, our passion for the
things of the moment. So change our hearts
and turn all our desires unto yourself, that
we may love what you approve, and do what
you command. Amen.
*The Kyrie
*The Assurance of Pardon
The Scripture --- John 20:19-31
*The Gloria Patri
The Anthem (Trinity)
The Pastoral Prayer
The Choral Response (Trinity)
The Announcements
The Receiving of Tithes and Offerings
*The Doxology
*The Offering Prayer and Lord's Prayer
The Hymn of Meditation 180
The Sermon --- "Written Proof!"
The Sermon Prayer
*The Hymn of Response 176
*The Benediction
*The Threefold Amen
*The Postlude

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mercersburg Association Meeting today.

Bible study will be held on Wednesday May 2
at 7:30 PM at the church in Duncannon.

Next Sunday the time of worship will change.
New Bloomfield 9:00 AM; Duncannon 10:30 AM.

NEXT WEEK SOME FEELING IN SERVICE

CHRIST CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women's Guild will have the service at
Kinkora May 6th at 2:00 PM.

Mother & Daughter Banquet Friday May 11th
at 6:30 PM. This will be a covered dish
supper.

There is a container in the back of the
church for anyone who wants to help with
the project of sponsoring a needy child.

TRINITY CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Spring Rally of the WCTU will be held
in our church this evening at 7:30 PM.

Teen Challenge will be at Keboch Church at
6:30 PM tonight. Youth and parents and
others are invited.

Please turn in the church survey forms in
exchange for the Key 73 window sticker.
We still need several volunteers to help with
the survey. If you would like to help
contact the Pastor.

The women of the church will meet on May
3rd at 7:30 P.M.

TIE CLIP FOUND ON BOARD

HAPPY HINE BAZAAR

Call To Worship: Sing aloud to God our strength:

Make a joyful noise to our God.

Call to ~~xxxxxxx~~ Confession: We must come to God seeking help in our lives. We read in Proverbs,

"Who conceals his transgressions will not prosper but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy." Let us look to God now in confession.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Assurance of Pardon: Harken now to the comforting assurance of the Grace of God promised in the Bible, The Psalmist writes, "I acknowledged my sin to Thee, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, I will confess my ~~xix~~ transgressions to the Lord; then thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin." Thus are we forgiven also. Amen.

JCH

"Written Proof!"

John 20:31, "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name."

The old saying is, "seeing is believing," and in our scripture we hear of Thomas seeing and believing. But rather than look at the story of Thomas, let us look instead to what John tells us at the very end of the chapter, for it is here that he states his complete purpose for writing. Most writers and authors write for money, or for fame or for both. But John wrote ^{For THIS REASON} ~~as he states~~, "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name." Simple enough isn't it?

But what does it all mean? To answer this we must look not only at this statement, but at the Gospels themselves. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels and the reason for this is because they all give not only a synopsis of the life of Jesus, but they do it by giving the same account ^{FROM} ~~by~~ more or less the same point of view. But when we come to the Gospel of John we find that we are confronted with an altogether different type of Gospel. John wrote his Gospel in the light of continually trying to read into each and every action of Jesus, that He was more than a man. He wrote from a theological view point and tried to show not only what Jesus did, but why He did it, and always to show how this was related to the will of God. In other words he was out to give written proof.

Now we can try to read the Gospels as history, because they are that. And we can try to read the Gospels as biographies, because they are that. But when we approach them only from a scholarly angle, we are not going to find the real Jesus Christ in them. We must read them not primarily as historians seeking historical knowledge, Or as scientists seeking the origin of the marvelous things that Jesus did. But instead, we must read them as men and women seeking God. Only in this light will

they shed light on our lives.

The Gospels never pass themselves off as trying to give a day by day account of the life of Jesus. They do not pretend they are telling of his hour by hour movements. They do not give ~~us~~ an exhaustive account of everything he said and did, but they ^{do} give us ~~xxx~~ a selection of typical incidents in his life which show a sample of what he was like, and the kinds of things that he did. The Gospels are meant to be appeals to take Jesus as Saviour, and as Master and as Lord. Their aim is not to give information but to give life. Their aim was to show that this man who could speak as he did, who could heal as he did, who could live as he did was none other than the Messiah, the Son of God; and that in that belief the individual might find the secret of real life.

If we look at excerpts from John we can see how skillfully he was inspired by God to make all of this very plain. He starts out very simply and states that, "In the beginning ~~xx~~ was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word, was God." And then he carries this further until he states, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father." This is just the start of John's Gospel and yet he makes it very clear who this Jesus is, and there can be no mistaking his intention to do so.

When Philip comes to Jesus and asks him to show them the Father, Jesus answers, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." So the apostolic testimony handed on to succeeding ^{GENERATIONS} ~~generations~~ as written by this same John in one of his letters is, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our own eyes that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us." (I John 1:1-3).

John shows throughout his Gospel that merely being able to see with the eyes or hear with the ears is not enough and that it takes a belief or a faith to accept this Jesus. The mighty acts of Jesus are

called signs in John's Gospel, and yet many who saw them were not led to faith. In one place the crowd comes to him and asks, "What sign do you do that we may see and believe you?" (6:30) And Jesus answers a little later, "You have seen me and yet do not believe." (6:36) And later he again says, "For judgement I came into ^{this} ~~the~~ world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see will become blind." (9:39), or again, "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life." (6:40).

DIFFERENT
1 In the 20th chapter ~~there is~~ ^{WE FIND} two stories of two disciples. ~~the~~ Peter went into the sepulchre and "he saw and believed." Thomas said, "Unless I can ~~not~~ see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe." Here we see ^{DEFINITE} a contrast in two people, concerning the credibility of what Jesus did. There are many, many more chapters and verses we could turn to to show how John is continually striving to show this Jesus as the Son of God, so that all may believe.

There were probably just as many sceptics in the days of John as there are today. This past week on Thursday evening CBS had a special program ~~xx~~ about Commercials, perhaps you saw it. One man involved in advertising research was being interviewed about the credibility of the average commercial. He made the remark that of course not all the information in a commercial is true. He said commercials were a means whereby you are being manipulated to buy. He said "we have a lot of manipulators in our society, but we do not call them that. Preachers are manipulators in the pulpit." Now I was not aware that I am a manipulator and I ~~really~~ must take exception to what he said. My task is not to cajole you, or tease you, or manipulate you, ^{TO} ~~in any way~~ ^{AS COMMERCIALS DO, TO GET YOU TO} to accept Christ in your life. My task is plainly and simply to give you the facts of what Christ in your life can and will mean to you and let you make the choice. What you do with your life is your business and if you choose to sit here and disbelieve

what I or any other preacher says about God and the Christian life, that is your prerogative. ^{IN YOUR HANDS} The consequences of your actions are ~~upon your life~~ and not mine. As long as I preach the Gospel I am fulfilling my task.

But then he also said, "I do not believe all that I hear on a commercial just as I do not believe all that I hear in church." Now here is a statement from a man ^{WHO COULD} ~~that~~ probably can pass for Mr. Average

citizen today. We have been fed so ~~much~~ ^{SO MANY} many untruths, half truths and downright lies, that even what we hear in church is questionable. Well, I really take exception to this because I firmly believe with all my ^{HEART} ~~very~~

^{SOUL} ~~being~~ that if the Gospel is being preached in the church, then we stand in peril if we disbelieve that it is true. When we express that the complete truth is not coming from the pulpit, then we stand in close proximity to the unpardonable sin. ^{YOU MAY RECALL} The unpardonable sin is to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit and when we question the truth coming from the pulpit, and the Holy Spirit is operative in that individual speaking from that pulpit, then we are beginning to call God a liar.

I cannot speak for other preachers, but I can truthfully say that I am continually striving to preach what God leads me to preach each week. And when I read in John that he says, "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name," ~~this means to me exactly what it says.~~ To me it is written proof that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that if I accept Him and believe in Him I will have eternal life. ^{AND SO MAY YOU.} ~~and if this is manipulation of the people that God has entrusted into my care, then I am guilty.~~ And this is what I am going to preach as long as God permits me to do so. And if this is manipulation of the people that God has entrusted into my care, then I must ^{PLEAD} ~~admit that I am~~ guilty.

Last week we talked of the credibility of the empty tomb, and the difference between belief and ~~unbelief~~ unbelief. Today we are talking about a passage of scripture that the author John carefully placed in the

text. In case you have not remembered where it is located it is ~~xxx~~ in the 20th chapter and the 31st verse. I suggest that if you are one of those people ^{who} ~~that~~ must see to believe then perhaps you should go home today and get out the bible that I trust you have there, and read it for yourself and then reflect just what it is you do believe about it.

(Illustration of small boy and father and how father accepted Christ;
Witness of Children)

Here is a classic example of what Jesus said about wisdom coming from the mouths of babes and children. But it ^{is} also a good example of someone believing without the necessity of seeing written proof. ~~xxxxx~~ We ~~xxx~~ find in the 20th chapter of John the remark Jesus made to Thomas ^{ABOUT HIS UNBELIEF} when he said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." So whether we can accept things without having to see them, or whether we are a little sceptical and must see the proof for ourselves, we cannot deny the fact that here in John's Gospel we see the written proof of what God did, and how He also inspired this man to set it down for all eyes to see. "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name."